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1962/10/23

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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FROM: Reykjavik

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 131, October 23, 9 P.M.

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Reviewed by: Elijah Kelly Jr.

Date: 2/10/92 19__

Circular 703 did not arrive in time for me to carry out instructions circular 705 but I have been in touch with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister today and given them copies speech and other material in today's wireless bulletin.

Foreign Minister emphasized his awareness, based on his recent visit to New York, of serious view American take of Cuban problem and in effect said he would find it difficult to criticize President's decision.

Prime Minister said he was impressed with calm, balanced but very firm tone of speech, that we obviously could not allow "such things" to go on in Cuba and, although he was in no position to pass judgment either on timing or substance of actions announced by President, problem would become more difficult as time went on and it was certainly wiser not to wait indefinitely before doing what needed to be done.

Non-Communist papers reported President's speech, and related events, in varying detail. So far only afternoon VISIR (independence) has carried editorial. Expressing understanding for US anxiety over developments in Cuba, paper concluded situation shows need for disarmament of major powers and that it is Soviet policy which is threatening world peace.

TRJODVILJINN (Communist) gave speech full treatment under headline "President of US Announces Armed Force Will Be Used To Prevent Navigation To Cuba (Tramples On International Law

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-2- 131, October 23, 9 P.M., from Reykjavik

And Jeopardizes Peace)". Following slanted account of speech paper commented: "Every reason to expect Soviet Union -- and not only it -- will react very hard...as measures announced have no legal basis. It may therefore be taken for granted that Soviet Union will flatly refuse to permit American warships to search Soviet merchantmen and will not hesitate to resort to armed force to ensure free navigation of its vessels. Obvious that such clashes could easily become spark igniting conflagration of global war." Additional two-column interpretation branded President's action as election maneuver.

In view current LIMTEL restriction, further telegraphic reporting will be limited to developments of substantial significance.

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